

he cites that under California law, second degree murder of a law enforcement officer, without special circumstances, is punishable by minimum of 25 years to life with the possibility of parole, while second degree murder under the Federal murder statute is "any term of years or life." In addition, Mr. Cooley cites that local prosecutors are more experienced at prosecuting murder cases and are better at the job than Federal prosecutors.

Finally, Mr. Cooley cites the "Rule of Speciality" in the U.S.-Mexico Extradition Treaty, which states that individuals extradited from one country to another can only be prosecuted under the charges included in the extradition request. Therefore, he argues that since H.R. 2363 provides "exclusive jurisdiction" to the Federal Government in such cases, that California will be barred from prosecuting a cop-killer who flees the country.

Although I strongly disagree with Mr. Cooley's interpretation of "exclusive jurisdiction," I have reached out to him and local law enforcement officers for suggestions on how to improve the bill. Based on their feedback, I, along with Mr. SCHIFF, am introducing the Justice for Peace Officers Act to build on the provisions of H.R. 2363 by enhancing the punishment for cop-killers and those who aid them, providing priority to State/local prosecutors in such cases, making clear that the bill does not supersede State/local jurisdiction and urging the renegotiation of the U.S.-Mexico Extradition Treaty to resolve the death penalty/life imprisonment roadblock.

The Justice for Peace Officers Act, like the Peace Officer Justice Act, makes it a Federal crime to kill a peace officer and flee the country. And like H.R. 2363, the Justice for Peace Officers Act makes the crime for first degree murder punishable by the death penalty or life imprisonment. The Justice for Peace Officers Act goes a step further by making murder in the second degree punishable by a mandatory minimum of 30 years in prison or life imprisonment. Under the current "federal murder statute" (18 U.S.C. 1111), the punishment for second degree murder is any term of years or life imprisonment. This change ensures that persons guilty of killing a peace officer under second degree murder and fleeing the country will face a significant minimum number of years under lock and key.

The Justice for Peace Officers Act also raises the penalty for those who help cowardly cop-killers flee the country to avoid prosecution. Under the current "accessory after the fact" federal statute (18 U.S.C. 3), the punishment for helping suspects, facing the death penalty or life imprisonment, to avoid capture is a maximum of 15 years in prison. The Justice for Peace Officers Act ensures that such aiders and abettors would serve a mandatory minimum sentence of 15 years behind bars.

Let me be clear that it will always be my preference for State and local prosecutors to go after cop killers—police keep our local communities safe and local prosecutors should have primary jurisdiction over these cases. That is why I included language in the Justice for Peace Officers Act to give priority to State/local prosecutors to pursue a suspect of killing a peace officer and fleeing the country. Specifically, the Attorney General, the Deputy Attorney General, the Associate Attorney General, or an Assistant Attorney General, in consultation with the appropriate State/local prosecutors, must provide formal ap-

proval in writing to pursue such a case. This gives State/local and Federal officials the opportunity to confer on the best course of action, and gives preference to State/local officials since no action can be taken on the Federal level without the additional step of obtaining formal written permission. This language is based on a provision in the current "flight to avoid prosecution" Federal statute (18 U.S.C. 1073). Also, the Justice for Peace Officers Act includes language making clear that nothing in the bill would supersede the authority of State/local prosecutors.

In addition, the penalty under the Justice for Peace Officers Act would be a consecutive sentence to any other State or Federal punishment. Since State/local authorities have first priority to prosecute and sentence such a suspect, the provision would ensure that any punishment on the local/State level would be enhanced by an additional Federal sentence.

Finally, we firmly believe that the Bush Administration should use all tools available to bring about a change in Mexico's policy regarding the extradition of nationals that will allow these brutal killers to face justice in the U.S. That is why we included a provision in the Justice for Peace Officers Act directing the Secretary of State to enter into formal discussions with the Mexican government on the U.S.-Mexico Extradition Treaty. The provision also directs the Secretary of State to urge the Mexican Government to use all available actions to persuade the Mexican Supreme Court to reconsider its October 2001 ruling so that the possibility of life imprisonment will not have an effect on the timely extradition of criminal suspects from Mexico to the U.S.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that the Justice for Peace Officers Act will signal to Mexico and any other country that refuses to extradite a fugitive cop-killer that the Congress of the United States considers this a crime against America and will bring the full resources of the Federal Government to bear to seek justice. I urge all of my colleagues to co-sponsor the Justice for Peace Officers Act.

#### VALLEJO FIGHTING BACK PARTNERSHIP CELEBRATES FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. GEORGE MILLER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 27, 2005*

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating Fighting Back Partnership of Vallejo, CA, as it celebrates its 15th anniversary.

The relationship between a city and its residents is a vital and interdependent one, deriving its strength from the quantity and quality of civic involvement and public spirit generated by such organizations as Vallejo Fighting Back Partnership.

Concerned citizens and members of the Vallejo City Council expressed alarm at the increasing use of drugs and alcohol during the late 1980's and formed a Red Ribbon Committee to address this problem and to explore programs and services that could potentially result in a meaningful reduction of substance abuse and related crimes and violence. The city of Vallejo successfully applied for a grant

from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to unite the community to comprehensively address substance abuse as one of 15 Fighting Back Partnerships nationwide.

Vallejo Fighting Back Partnership, an independent non-profit coalition, developed a continuum of care approach including education, prevention, treatment, and after-care services. The Partnership, in an effort to adhere to its mission, has organized more than 50 partners and thousands of residents including support from city, county, State and Federal agencies, private non-profits, corporate and foundation donors, who emanate from an array of diverse backgrounds including law enforcement, health care, social services, government, public education, treatment facilities, neighborhood organizations, business, criminal justice, and faith-based groups.

The Partnership began to make noticeable and measurable reductions in substance abuse related crimes, primarily on the strength of renewed funding from the Johnson Foundation in 1995 and a more focused strategic plan that endeavored to create positive outcomes in three key areas:

Neighborhoods, Treatment, and Youth and Families. Local data obtained between 1995 and 2000 validated the successful outcomes of Fighting Back's mission of reducing substance abuse and related mayhem in the community, enabling the Partnership to be chosen as 2001 Outstanding Coalition by the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, CADCA, which was presented to Fighting Back Partnership of Vallejo on December 14, 2001, in Washington, DC.

After 12 years of funding from the Johnson Foundation ended in 2002, totaling over \$6 million, Fighting Back Partnership continues to be a dynamic coalition working to reduce substance abuse through innovative and successful programs thanks to its dedicated staff and board of directors. Today, Fighting Back provides counseling and services to families through its three Family Resource Centers, employs science-based educational programs in cooperation with the Vallejo School District, develops leadership skills in young people through its Youth Partnership, and unites residents to improve deteriorating neighborhoods through its Neighborhood Revitalization Program.

I know I speak for all Members of Congress when I congratulate Fighting Back Partnership for its 15-year commitment to decreasing substance abuse and related crimes thereby improving the quality of life for all Vallejoans, and wish its board of directors, staff, and community partners many more years of success.

#### INTRODUCING A BI-PARTISAN RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF AN ALZHEIMER'S SEMI-POSTAL STAMP

**HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 27, 2005*

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to introduce a resolution urging the United States Postal Service to act on a pending petition for an Alzheimer's Semi-Postal Stamp. I am joined by Co-chair of the Congressional Alzheimer's Taskforce, Representative CHRISTOPHER SMITH, Democratic Leader NANCY

PELOSI and Representative JOHN BOOZMAN in a bi-partisan effort to raise funds for Alzheimer's research through the issuance of a semi-postal stamp.

The petition of support for the issuance of an Alzheimer's semi-postal has been pending at the United States Post Office for over 4 years. It is long overdue that we honor this petition and allow Alzheimer's the opportunity it deserves to benefit from this public awareness and fundraising campaign.

The race to find a cure for Alzheimer's disease is now more urgent than ever. Four and a half million Americans, including one in 10 people over age 65 and nearly half of those over 85, have Alzheimer's disease. Unless science finds a way to prevent or cure this terrible illness, as the baby boomers continue to age, nearly 16 million Americans will have Alzheimer's disease by the year 2050.

Mr. Speaker, we need to help and give hope to those who are fighting the moment to moment physical, mental and behavioral battles of Alzheimer's every day. We need to help and give hope to the behind the scenes heroes—the family care-givers who selflessly offer their love and care. And we need to help and give hope to the researchers working hard to find a cure. Working together we can do more—and we must. We must do everything we can to ensure that one day Alzheimer's is a disease of the past and issuing a semi-postal stamp can help do just that.

The best way to fight Alzheimer's disease and reduce the number of patients who suffer is to find ways to prevent it before it starts. Investments we make now mean longer, healthier lives for all of us. If we can delay the onset of Alzheimer's disease by even 5 years, it would save this country billions of dollars—and would improve the lives of millions of families. We can act now to strengthen our commitment to prevent Alzheimer's and to finding a cure for this devastating disease.

Semi-postal stamps are special stamps which were authorized by Congress as a tool for the United States Postal Service to not only raise funds but awareness of worthy causes. An Alzheimer's stamp would allow the public to directly contribute to research funds by charging a higher price than normal postage for the stamp and allocating most of the proceeds to research on this insidious and debilitating disease. We simply cannot afford to wait another minute, or another four years until we give Alzheimer's the attention and opportunity it deserves. I hope that the Postal Service will act and help to make a difference in the future by allowing us to contribute to Alzheimer's research through a semi-postal stamp today.

#### TRIBUTE TO ELMER STOCKER

#### HON. MIKE PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 27, 2005*

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask that the members of the House of Representatives allow me to bring to their attention the good works of a man who has long been active in the rural electrification program in Indiana and who is now approaching his well-deserved opportunity to retire from the field. While his retirement will leave a large void of

experience, activity and judgment for rural electricians in Indiana, and for his community in Indiana, which will not be easy to replace, today's comments are meant to remind us all of the many people around our nation whose unceasing efforts contribute to the betterment of our quality of life.

Mr. Elmer Stocker, currently the CEO of the Indiana Statewide Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives, Inc., will retire on December 31, 2005. He will end nearly 40 years of service in the electric industry. During that time Mr. Stocker has worked his way up through the ranks from entry-level position to industry leader. He began service with Whitley County REMC in 1966 in the dispatch and work order department of the cooperative. Over the years he also worked in the accounting, member services and marketing departments, developing a hands-on appreciation of all aspects of the electric utility business, and working with customers on their needs and expectations. In 1975 he became Assistant Manager, and in 1976 he began working as executive vice president/general manager of Whitley County REMC. During that time he not only ran the daily operations of his cooperative, but used his talents as a leader to serve as president of the REMC Managers Association in Indiana and as president of the Board of Directors of Wabash Valley Power Association, the generation and transmission cooperative that provides wholesale power to cooperatives throughout central and northern Indiana.

In 1986 Mr. Stocker left Whitley County REMC to work for 11 years at Wabash Valley power, where he was vice president of member and corporate relations and vice president of marketing. During that time he also moved onto the regional stage, serving a term as vice president of the Great Lakes Electric Consumers Association.

In 1997 the board of directors of Indiana Statewide, recognizing Mr. Stocker's knowledge of the program and respect among his peers at a time when the electric industry was facing tumultuous change, asked Mr. Stocker to serve as CEO of the trade group. He took up that leadership role from 1997 until this day.

This impressive record of professional achievement is only a part of Mr. Stocker's role in the American community however. During this time of advancement in his employment, Mr. Stocker also engaged in numerous personal and civic activities that are even better representative of the qualities that are at the foundation of American communities. For example, Mr. Stocker pursued post-secondary education while holding a full time job, and received his bachelor degree from Indiana University in 1975. He served in the Army National Guard from 1964 to 1970.

As a community leader, Mr. Stocker took on the role of Whitley County United Way Drive Chairman. He joined and rose through the ranks of the Masons and Scottish rite. He served as an officer of the Aboite Township Community Association and as president of the Times Comer Little League. He was a long time active member and volunteer in the Columbia City United Methodist Church, and was a member of the board for the Carmel Dad's Club. Among all these roles, he fit in time to join the Indianapolis Airport Rotary Club as well.

As a family man, a community volunteer, and a professional member of the electric util-

ity industry in Indiana, Elmer Stocker has exemplified the best values of American life for many years now. I wanted to share with the members today that this good man will soon enjoy the satisfaction of reaping the rewards of his long service through a well-deserved retirement, in which I am sure he will continue to volunteer good works. Thank you for indulging me in this time today, and especially thank you to Elmer Stocker for all he has given to our proud State of Indiana.

#### TRIBUTE TO THE REVEREND JAMES WILLIAM BESSERT

#### HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 27, 2005*

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Reverend James William Bessert as he celebrates the 25th anniversary of his ordination as a Roman Catholic priest.

As many do, I know him simply as Father Jim. I am proud to call him a friend and join with so many others in offering our congratulations to Father Jim, a servant of God who has truly dedicated himself to walking the path of Christ.

In his 25 years as a priest, Father Jim has shared the Good News and his gift of music since his first ordained assignment as associate pastor of St. Maria Goretti Parish in Bay City to his present calling as pastor at St. Brigid of Kildare Parish in Midland, Michigan. I am especially privileged as a graduate of St. Brigid School and native son of the parish to acknowledge Father Jim's positive impact on the church and the school communities.

At a time when some parishes and schools face the heart-wrenching challenge of decreased membership and enrollment, St. Brigid is experiencing a rebirth on both accounts. The pews are filled with families and the sanctuary resounds with worshipful song. Since he arrived at St. Brigid in 1999, Father Jim's vision and example have proven a reason for this blessing in downtown Midland. With a shepherd's care, he walks with the flock of St. Brigid in learning and loving the way of Christ.

As the members of the community of believers, we offer our prayers and congratulations to Father Jim on his silver anniversary as a priest and wish him many more years of inspired and inspiring leadership. We pray that the sustaining strength of the Spirit continues to guide him.

On behalf of Michigan's Fourth Congressional District, may God continue to lead Father Jim to do His will.

#### IN HONOR OF SERGEANT MICHAEL EGAN, UNITED STATES ARMY

#### HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 27, 2005*

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Army Sergeant Michael Egan, who made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of his country on September 19, 2005 at the age of 36. While on patrol near Ramadi, Sergeant Egan's convoy came under ambush